

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EA-07 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 ACDA-07 AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01

CG-00 CIAE-00 EPG-02 COME-00 DLOS-09 DODE-00

DOT-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FEAE-00 FMC-01

TRSE-00 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 EURE-00 /131 W

-----121545Z 061917 /40

O R 121345Z MAY 77

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3775

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 EC BRUSSELS 4806

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: EEC EFIS PLOS

SUBJECT: US FISHERY OFF FRENCH GUIANA

REF: EC BRUSSELS 4707

1. SUMMARY: THE MISSION HAS OBTAINED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON EC INTENTIONS TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF U.S. AND THIRD COUNTRY VESSELS FISHING OFF FRENCH GUIANA, INCLUDING AN EXPLANATION OF THE FORMULA USED TO CALCULATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF VESSELS. MISSION OFFICER REITERATED POTENTIAL PROBLEMS THAT COULD BE CREATED BY SUCH LIMITATIONS, INCLUDING POSSIBLE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR DEVELOPING ECONOMY OF FRENCH GUIANA ITSELF. SEVERAL SOURCES INDICATED THAT
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THE BASIC PURPOSE OF THE RESTRICTIONS MAY BE TO PUT PRESSURE ON BRAZIL TO AGREE TO NEGOTIATE REGIONAL SHRIMP FISHING ARRANGEMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. MISSION OFFICER CALLED ON YVES ROLAND-GOSSELIN, EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL IN THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR DEVELOPMENT (DG VIII) WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR FISHERY

NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING FRENCH GUIANA AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, TO EXPRESS CONCERN OVER THE PLANNED EC LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF VESSELS FROM THE US (AND OTHER COUNTRIES) WHICH WOULD BE LICENSED TO FISH OFF FRENCH GUIANA. HE OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY RE-EMPHASIZING THE POINTS MADE IN PARA 1 REFTEL.

3. GOSSELIN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE MAY BE A SMALL SHRIMP SURPLUS AT PRESENT OFF FRENCH GUIANA. AFTER CONSIDERABLE HESITATION, HE SAID SOME LIMITATIONS WOULD NEVERTHELESS BE DESIRABLE ON FISHING IN THE AREA BECAUSE, IN THE ABSENCE OF BRAZILIAN COOPERATION IN REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS, A SHORTAGE OF SHRIMP OFF FRENCH GUIANA WOULD SOON DEVELOP. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE LIMIT OF 65 US VESSELS WAS CALCULATED FROM THE FRENCH ESTIMATE THAT THE TOTAL SHRIMP CATCH BY US VESSELS OFF BRAZIL, GUIANA, AND SURINAM IS 3000 METRIC TONS PER YEAR, OF WHICH 1,300 TONS ARE CAUGHT OFF FRENCH GUIANA. THUS, THE US MONTHLY TAKE OFF FRENCH GUIANA AVERAGES ABOUT 110 METRIC TONS AND THE CATCH FOR THE REMAINING 8 MONTHS OF THE YEAR (MAY-DECEMBER) WOULD BE 880 TONS. US AND OTHER FISHING INTERESTS USE 20-25 TON BOATS CAPABLE OF CATCHING ROUGHLY 60 TONS OF SHRIMP PER YEAR. ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT ROUGHLY ONE-THIRD OF EACH US BOAT'S TAKE IS OFF FRENCH GUIANA, THE CATCH PER BOAT FOR THE REMAINING 8 MONTHS IN THAT AREA WOULD BE 13.3 TONS. DIVIDING THE 880 TONS NOTED ABOVE BY 13.3 TONS WOULD GIVE THE NUMBER OF US VESSELS NEEDED TO HARVEST THE US ESTIMATED CATCH FOR THE REST OF 1977 OR ROUGHLY 65 BOATS. GOSSELIN INDICATED THAT A SIMILAR MATHEMATICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FORMULA HAD BEEN USED TO CALCULATE THE NUMBER OF OTHER THIRD-COUNTRY VESSELS THAT WOULD BE LICENSED OFF FRENCH GUIANA ON AN INTERIM BASIS FOR MAY AND JUNE.

4. GOSSELIN NOTED THAT THE FIGURE OF 65 CORRESPONDS CLOSELY TO AN ESTIMATE FROM FRENCH AUTHORITIES IN CAYENNE THAT THE NUMBER OF US SHRIMP-FISHING VESSELS BASED IN FRENCH GUIANA (APPARENTLY OPERATED BY THE US FIRM PIDEG) WILL INCREASE FROM 30 IN 1976 TO 60 IN 1977. IT IS THE COMMUNITY'S INTENTION, HE SAID, TO ASSURE THAT THERE BE NO REDUCTION IN THE FISHING EFFORT BY THE CAYENNE-BASED US FISHING FLEET, WHICH PROVIDES EMPLOYMENT FOR OVER 300 LOCAL WORKERS AND CONTRIBUTES TO THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF FRENCH GUIANA (WHICH HE NOTED IN PASSING WOULD PROBABLY RECEIVE FAVORED TREATMENT BY THE EC AS A DEVELOPING AREA EVEN THOUGH IT IS A FRENCH DEPARTMENT).

5. THE MISSION OFFICER COMMENTED THAT THESE CALCULATIONS DID NOT SEEM TO MAKE SENSE. FISHING CAN ONLY TAKE PLACE

WHERE THE HIGHLY MIGRATORY SHRIMP ARE LOCATED; THIS MAY
TAKE PLACE FOR A WHILE OFF ONE COUNTRY, WITH NO FISHING
OFF THE OTHER COUNTRIES UNTIL THE SHRIMP MIGRATE TO THEIR
ZONES. LIMITING THE NUMBER OF VESSELS IN FRENCH GUIANA
IN ORDER TO IMPOSE AVERAGE ANNUAL QUOTAS MEANS THAT THESE
QUOTAS CAN ALMOST CERTAINLY NOT BE HARVESTED DURING THE
LIMITED TIME THAT THE SHRIMP ARE OFF FRENCH GUIANA. SINCE
THE US HAS ABOUT 100-120 REGISTERED SHRIMP TRAWLERS IN THE
ENTIRE AREA (A FIGURE WHICH GOSSELIN AND OTHER COMMISSION
OFFICIALS SEEM TO ACCEPT), A CUT-BACK TO 65 DURING THE
PERIOD WHEN THE SHRIMP ARE OFF FRENCH GUIANA WOULD PRESUMABLY
MAKE IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE THE TOTAL QUOTA OF 880
TONS FOR THE 8-MONTH PERIOD. HE NOTED THAT THE US HAS NOT
YET SET LIMITS ON THE NUMBER OF VESSELS IN ITS FISHERY
CONSERVATION ZONE AND OBSERVED THAT QUANTITATIVE QUOTAS
OFF FRENCH GUIANA WOULD APPEAR MUCH MORE LOGICAL IF SCIENTIFIC
EVIDENCE INDICATED THAT RESTRICTIONS WERE NECESSARY (WHICH
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WE DOUBT FROM OUR INFORMATION).

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6. THE MISSION OFFICER FURTHER POINTED OUT THAT THE MEASURES COULD FRUSTRATE ATTAINMENT OF THE EC GOAL OF ASSURING A CONTINUED HIGH LEVEL OF FISHING BY THE US FLEETS BASED IN FRENCH GUIANA. THE USG IN DETERMINING THE 65 APPLICATIONS TO BE FORWARDED TO THE PRESIDENCY COUNTRY (THE UK UNTIL JUNE 30 AND BELGIUM OR THE EC THEREAFTER) COULD NOT FAVOR ANY SINGLE US COMPANY OR SITE OF SHORE-BASED PROCESSING OVER OTHERS. IF 1976 IS USED AS A BASE YEAR, THE 30 US VESSELS FISHING FROM CAYENNE MIGHT BE REDUCED BY ABOUT ONE-HALF, WELL UNDER THE 60 DESIRED BY THE EC. FURTHERMORE, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FAVOR THE US SHRIMP INDUSTRY BASED IN FRENCH GUIANA OVER THAT BASED IN SURINAM, WHICH IS ALSO A DEVELOPING AREA COUNTING ON THE EXPANSION OF ITS OWN FISHERY INDUSTRY FOR GROWTH.

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7. A DUTCH PERMDEL OFFICER ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE IMPACT OF THE LICENSE LIMITATION ON FISHING ACTIVITIES BASED IN SURINAM. HE SAID THAT HE AND MOST OTHER MEMBER STATE REPRESENTATIVES HAD APPROVED THE PROPOSED MEASURES KNOWING (AND CARING) LITTLE ABOUT FISHERY OFF FRENCH GUIANA. HE SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY INFLUENCED BY THE FRENCH AND COMMISSION ARGUMENT THAT THESE RESTRICTIONS WERE NEEDED IN ORDER TO "SQUEEZE" BRAZILIAN FISHING INTERESTS AND MAKE BRAZIL POLITICALLY AWARE OF THE DESIRABILITY OF NEGOTIATING A REGIONAL SHRIMP AGREEMENT. HE PROMISED TO TAKE A LONGER LOOK AT THE PROPOSED REGULATION WHEN IT RETURNS TO THE EC COUNCIL AFTER APPROVAL BY THE UK PARLIAMENTARY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

8. IN A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION, FARNELL OF THE COMMISSION REPEATED EARLIER ARGUMENTS THAT IT IS IN US AND COMMISSION INTEREST THAT THE EC NOT DECLARE A SHRIMP SURPLUS OFF FRENCH GUIANA WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF THE SEA REVISED SINGLE NEGOTIATING TEXT, THE EC WOULD HAVE TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO ALL COMERS. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE COMMISSION HOPED TO USE THESE MEASURES TO APPLY POLITICAL PRESSURE TO BRING BRAZIL TO THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. A FRENCH PERMDEL OFFICER IN DISCUSSING BRAZIL'S LACK OF INTEREST IN A REGIONAL SHRIMP FISHING ARRANGEMENT, EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE US COULD USE ITS INFLUENCE TO MAKE BRAZIL MORE AWARE OF THE ADVANTAGES OF COLLABORATION, POSSIBLY IN THE COURSE OF RENEGOTIATION OF THE US FISHING AGREEMENT WITH BRAZIL WHICH HE SAID WAS IMMINENT.

9. A UK PERMDEL OFFICER CONFIRMED THAT THE UK ISSUES FISHING LICENSES FREE OF CHARGE. HE ADDED THAT APPLICATIONS CONTAINING THE NECESSARY DATA (PARA 5, EC BRUSSELS 3515) WOULD PRESUMABLY BE SUBMITTED THROUGH THE US EMBASSY IN LONDON.

10. ACTION REQUESTED: (A) DEPT AND/OR EMBASSY BRASILIA
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MAY WISH TO COMMENT ON THE EC VIEW THAT A REGIONAL FISHERY AGREEMENT IS NECESSARY TO ASSURE OPTIMUM EXPLOITATION OF SHRIMP RESOURCES OFF THE COASTS OF THE PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES, AND WHETHER EC RESTRICTION ON SHRIMP FISHING BY BRAZILIAN VESSELS OFF FRENCH GUIANA IS LIKELY TO BE EFFECTIVE IN MAKING THE BRAZILIANS MORE RECEPTIVE TO NEGOTIATION. (B) IN ADDITION TO RESPONDING TO REQUEST CONTAINED PARA 7 REFTTEL, DEPT MAY WISH TO BRING SUBSTANCE OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION TO THE ATTENTION OF CASTLE AND COOKE FOODS CO., SAN FRANCISCO, (WHOSE VICE PRESIDENT RAY PAGAN IS VISITING BRUSSELS IN LATE MAY), WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT MORE INFORMATION AND DATA ON FISHING OFF BRAZIL AND THE GUIANAS MIGHT BUTTRESS THE CASE AGAINST FISHING RESTRICTIONS. HINTON

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Message Attributes

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